

The Intentional Tourist  
by Jarrod McCartney  
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Even with the naked eye, it was easy to see that there were more people in town for Street Car Days. Both sides of Webster Street were filled for the parade and the Friday events were well-attended. There were 43 kids in the Missoula Theatre production and, by most accounts, the Saturday events in the park were well-attended including an impressive car show from the Webster County Community Hospital. Mother nature spoiled what was sure to be a great concert in the City Park, but a stalwart and diverse crowd showed up to have a few drinks at the Community Center anyhow. I was particularly impressed with the group of people who used our Red Cloud and Street Car Days logos for t-shirts and koozies. Copyright infringement notwithstanding, it shows some real enthusiasm for and pride in the weekend that people would go to such trouble. I salute this year's organizers, not only for honoring Wayne Gerlach (the oldest surviving WWII combat veteran in Webster County), but getting this event back close to its former glory. I also salute past organizers who kept the flame burning for this event throughout the years. It's not easy and it's often thankless work. Thank you all for making it happen.

It's probably no coincidence that we had increased attendance the same year that both Heritage Tourism and the Chamber of Commerce decided to market the event more aggressively. From the Heritage Tourism end of things, we decided to utilize grant money we had been given by the Tourism Commission to market the event on Facebook, targeting the Tri-Cities and northern Kansas areas in particular. Likewise, a number of social media ads were run and I took it upon myself to create a series of memes counting down the days to the event. A combination of careful marketing and improving the quality of life in Red Cloud are the keys to the community's sustainability and success.

In other news, work is rapidly progressing on the Hotel Garber site. By the time you read this, the Tru-Built Construction crew and area subcontractors will be busy doing the work needed to frame and eventually restore the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the building. Unfortunately, this means they had to close down US Hwy 136 between Webster and Elm streets in order to accommodate a large crane, 5 semi loads of trusses and framing materials, and to maneuver a large telehandler to get materials onto and off of the roof. The closure should last only 3 weeks and traffic is being detoured around 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. and Elm Street. We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience this may cause anyone, particularly local businesses. But we are excited that this project is moving closer to completion.

I am also excited about the possible creation of a Central Community College Learning Center in Red Cloud in the near future. It's something that could realistically happen but we all need to work together to make sure that it does. More on that next month.